Teaching SST 4 Transcript

NARRATOR: Some group members may feel uncomfortable speaking in front of others, which may make them reluctant to do a role-play. Group leaders can help people feel more comfortable by creating a safe atmosphere in the room and the expectation of positive feedback and support, providing the rationale for role-playing, and allowing a reluctant group member to observe other group members conducting role-plays and then return to them later.

LEADER: Okay, all right, great job, you guys. So what we're going to do now is, we're going to do some practice, okay? Matt, how about you come up and do some practice?

MATT: I'm just not really in the mood today, sorry.

CINDY: He never comes up. He never role-plays.

LEADER: You do such a great job with it, too.

MATT: I'm not very talkative. Sorry.

LEADER: Yeah? Well, I mean, one of the things that you have mentioned, you were talking about earlier, is that sometimes, you know, you have a little bit of difficulty making some requests. It can feel a little uncomfortable, doing that. So it sounds like this would be kind of a great thing, that maybe getting a little bit of more practice doing this would make it, make you feel a little more comfortable if you need to let somebody know that, that you need to maybe have them turn down the radio where you were living, or if you needed to ask them a favor, if they could help you out.

MATT: I don't know.

LEADER: Okay. Well, why don't you come up and give it a try?

MATT: [Sighs] All right, I'll give it a try.

LEADER: Okay.

CINDY: Oh, boy.

NARRATOR: Sometimes, group members may give feedback that is critical or negative. Some suggestions for handling negative feedback include the group leader encouraging and modeling positive feedback to the group. Start eliciting feedback by saying, "What did you like about the role-play?" or, "What did they do well?" And redirecting group members that give negative feedback to provide more positive feedback.

MAN 1: She didn't suggest a compromise, though. She just was willing to go along with her and go to McDonald's.

MAN 2: That was the compromise.

MAN 1: That was the compromise? Yeah, but she didn't ask for anything -- in other words, first she said she wanted to go to McDonald's and *she* wanted to go to Burger King. But then she says, "Okay, we won't go to McDonald's. We'll go to Burger King."

CINDY: So what did you really like about it?

MAN 1: It was good -- I mean, it was okay. There was no fussing, no -- it was --

CINDY: So it was pleasant.

MAN 1: Right, right.

CINDY: Nice tone of voice.

MAN 1: Uh-huh.

NARRATOR: Sometimes people with less social impairment may have difficulty acknowledging that they may need social skills training. However, even those with less impairment can experience difficulties in certain areas. One thing that the group leader can do is focus on how skills training will help the group member achieve their personal goals, and tailor role-plays to meet those goals.

LEADER: How about you, Shannon? Are there times where you need to make requests from other people?

SHANNON: Yeah, this really doesn't apply to me.

LEADER: Doesn't apply to you?

SHANNON: No.

LEADER: Okay, well, let me ask, kind of, thinking about this and kind of thinking about the goal that you have for yourself -- I know you talked about this last time -- is that you -- one of the things that you want to get along a little bit better with some people, like your roommate.

SHANNON: Yeah, but I know how to do that.

LEADER: Okay.

BECKY: You're lucky.

SHANNON: No, I'm just not in that situation.

LEADER: Okay.

BECKY: [Sighs]

LEADER: Well, and one of the things that we kind of do -- I mean, it's great that you feel like you're really good at that, because one of the things, and one of the reasons why we kind of go through and do some practice with this is that, as we've talked about before, you know, when you're first learning to do something new, or maybe if you're in a difficult situation that you're not used to, sometimes it can really help if you kind of know the steps, so you're learning something new and you practice it. And you kind of practice it over and over again until you feel really comfortable in that situation. So maybe -- it sounds like you might be able to give some good feedback and be able to help other people in the group, as well, maybe, as they're kind of learning how to make requests in situations that they feel.